

**Commissioner of Political Practices Program Goals**

Agency/Program #: 3202-01-G2

Division:

Program: Administration

Agency Name:	Commissioner of Political Practices		
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**Program or Project Description:**

This project involves providing an electronic filing system and additional resources on the web for political campaigns in order to simplify reporting, reduce campaign reporting errors, enhance public disclosure, and improve compliance with the law.

**Appropriation, Expenditure and Source**

Fund Name:	2008		2009		Approp & Expenditure numbers are as of August 29, 2008
	Approp.	Expended	Approp.	Expended	
General Fund	58,101	58,101	57,195	5,751	
State Special					
Federal Funds					
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$58,101</b>	<b>\$58,101</b>	<b>\$57,195</b>	<b>\$5,751</b>	

**Legislative Goal(s):**

Facilitate accurate and timely filing of the required campaign finance reports.

**Legislative Performance Measures:**

Reduce filing errors by 25 percent by December 2008. Point those with questions to the website and maintain timely and topical information so that fewer than 25 percent of callers call back with more questions.

**2009 Biennium Significant Milestones:**

Completion Dates

Target

Actual

1	Testing for candidate registration and reporting is underway.	12/21/2007	Registration -- 12/7/2007
2	Launch of candidate registration and reporting is planned for early in the new year.	1/10/2008	Registration -- 12/12/2007
3	Development of committee registration is underway with launch planned for March '08	3/15/2008	
4	Testing continues for both committee and candidate reporting. Services will be launched as soon as they're ready	5/13/2008	
5	The degree of success in meeting our goal will be evident following reporting on the Nov '08 election.	12/23/2008	failed

Remake the CPP website; provide more information and an enhanced 'search' function.	12/15/2008	6/23/2008
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**Agency Performance Report:**

Target dates and revised target dates were not met for the candidate and committee services.

Numerous problems are being found in the test phase. We identify work-arounds and simple fixes whenever possible, but some issues require time-consuming changes including formal change orders and changes to the database. Despite the changes we have been able to stay within our budget and of course intend to through the end of the biennium.

About one year ago we identified a risk that the test phase of these projects would come at the height of the campaign cycle and that CPP staff would be unable to focus sufficiently on testing. That risk was realized, and despite our best efforts we have not been able to push through the test phase to resolve all the outstanding issues.

We've also found that important functionality wasn't anticipated in the design, a design that was formalized in 2005 for the candidate reporting service. This is the service receiving most of the attention and the highest priority. So we must weigh sacrificing important functionality in order to launch a system. As of this writing, the system still has too many problems to launch.

It appears our best course of action is to continue to work toward launching the services as soon as possible. If the services can be launched prior to March '09 they'll be useful for upcoming local and school elections and it will be a good opportunity to conduct a "real time" test.

Milestone 6, "Remake the CPP website; provide more information and an enhanced 'search' function" was achieved well ahead of schedule. The "makeover" of our website has been well received and the enhanced search function opens up past decisions to key word searches for the first time. These changes are part of the reason Montana received the "most improved" designation in a recent report by the respected Campaign Disclosure Project. They commented that "the homepage of the Commissioner of Political Practices' web site is cleanly designed and provides easy links to campaign disclosure reports, contribution limits, and other important contextual information."

**LFD Narrative:**

LFD ASSESSMENT: Progress Report Needed

DATA RELEVANCE: Yes

APPROPRIATION STATUS: Appropriation and expenditure data were provided. As indicated by COPP it would appear they will stay within the appropriations for the current biennium.

COMMENTS/ISSUES: The workgroup may wish to discuss the potential for funding requests for this project in the 2011 biennium. Timelines presented to the General Government subcommittee and the milestones included in the performance measurement report were to have this project completed before the end of the 2009 biennium. Given the concerns with functionality outlined above, the workgroup may wish to discuss the potential that there will be additional costs to correct the functionality

OPTIONS: Upgrade or downgrade the rating - options for workgroup in relation to the rating are No further review or Progress Report Requested



Version	Date	Author
	9/24/2008	

Change Description